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Mrs. Laura Bush Designates City of Williamsburg a *Preserve America* Community

WASHINGTON, DC –City of Williamsburg today was honored when Mrs. Laura Bush designated it among the nation's newest *Preserve America* communities.

“*Preserve America* communities demonstrate that they are committed to preserving America's heritage while ensuring a future filled with opportunities for learning and enjoyment,” Mrs. Bush said. “This new community designation program, combined with the *Preserve America* Presidential Awards and federal support, provides strong incentives for continued preservation of our cultural and natural heritage resources. I commend you for your commitment to preserving an important part of our nation's historic past for visitors, neighbors, and, most importantly, for children.”

Mayor Jeanne Zeidler, Congresswoman Jo Ann Davis, Richard McCluney, Vice President for Productions, Publications, and Learning Ventures for Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, and Jodi Miller, Assistant City Manager received a certificate of designation signed by Mrs. Bush that City of Williamsburg is now a *Preserve America* Community. The *Preserve America* initiative is a new White House effort to encourage and support community efforts for the preservation and enjoyment of America's priceless cultural and natural heritage. The goals of the initiative include: a greater shared knowledge about the nation's past; strengthened regional identities and local pride; increased local participation in preserving the country's cultural and natural heritage assets; and, support for the economic vitality of our communities.



Communities designated through the program receive national recognition for their efforts. Other benefits include appropriate use of the *Preserve America* logo on signs and promotional materials; notification to media, state tourism offices, and visitor bureaus; and listing on a web-based directory to showcase preservation efforts and highlight heritage tourism destinations. The Bush Administration's fiscal year 2005 budget contains a request for \$10 million in grant funds for which communities meeting the *Preserve America* criteria will be eligible to apply. These matching fund grants of \$50,000 to \$250,000 would go on a competitive basis to projects that preserve and use important historic resources for promotion of heritage tourism and other economic revitalization projects.

John L. Nau, III, chairman of the federal Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), said, “There are significant economic, educational, and cultural benefits that historic preservation, through efforts such as heritage tourism, bring to a community. Sustainable preservation is not a cost for maintaining the past, it is an investment in building the future. You have shown that your community is a national leader in this trend and have created a powerful positive example for others.”

The ACHP partners with the Department of the Interior to administer the *Preserve America* Community program on behalf of the Office of the First Lady. For more information and updates on the initiative, please visit PreserveAmerica.gov.